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Letter dated 2 October 2003 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), I have the honour to convey the attached report on the international security presence in Kosovo, covering the period from 1 to 31 August 2003 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would bring it to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**

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Annex

Monthly report to the United Nations on the operations of the Kosovo Force

1. During the reporting period (1-31 August 2003) there were just over 22,100 Kosovo Force (KFOR) troops in-theatre.

Security

2. The general situation in Kosovo during August 2003 saw a continuation of the trend towards an increasing number of inter-ethnic incidents begun in July: a total of 42 such incidents were reported, with a large number of shootings and grenade/bomb attacks. This situation represented a slight decrease from a year ago (48 incidents in August 2002).

3. On 2 August, four men armed with automatic rifles opened fire near a Kosovo Police Service (KPS) station in Pec and shot dead 3 Kosovo Albanians (a girl aged 11, a woman aged 24 and a man aged 30). Five other people were injured. Some shots hit the KPS station, prompting the police to shoot back. Officials of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) are of the view that the attack was aimed at Rexhep Kelmendi, who was a prosecution witness in the trial of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) leader Daut Haradinaj.

4. On 3 August, an UNMIK police officer, Satish Menon (India), was killed in the vicinity of Mitrovica while driving to Leposavic. The driver of the patrol car, a British UNMIK police officer, was slightly injured. The investigation into this murder suggested that this attack was well-organized and planned in advance. The investigation continues.

5. On 9 August, a man was killed and two others seriously injured in Jablanica when they were ambushed while travelling from Pec in a van. Following the shooting, UNMIK police requested helicopter support from KFOR to assist in tracking down the suspects, who had fled into mountainous terrain in the direction of the Kulina border crossing point. Two suspects are currently in custody, and several other persons are being interviewed by the police.

6. On 13 August, an unknown individual or individuals opened fire with an automatic weapon on a group of six Kosovo Serb teenagers swimming in the Bistrica River between Zahac and Gorazdevac. One 19-year-old died immediately, and a 12-year-old boy died on the way to hospital. A third teenager received a severe head wound and was taken to the military hospital in north Mitrovica before being transferred to a hospital in Belgrade. The perpetrator or perpetrators escaped, and the motive for the attack remains unclear. In response to this incident, KFOR issued a warming order and fragmentation order aimed at increasing the visible presence of KFOR with a view to deterring any further violence.

7. Serbian politicians strongly condemned the attack and criticized UNMIK for failing to protect the Kosovo Serb minority. On 14 and 15 August, several demonstrations were held, the larger of which was in Mitrovica, where 1,000 people gathered peacefully for a candlelight vigil. Following that demonstration, a hand grenade was thrown at an ethnic Albanian residence in Mitrovica. No injuries resulted from the explosion. On 15 August, the two victims of the shooting were buried in Gorazevac, with nearly 300 people attending the service, among them well

known politicians and members of the Orthodox Church. The Serbian Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Zivkovic and Mr. Covic, attended the memorial service.

8. On 18 August, a Kosovo Serb, Tonic Dragan, who had been shot seven days before in Skulanovo while fishing, died in Belgrade. The funeral was held on 19 August without incident; the UNMIK investigation continues.

9. On 26 August, a group of Kosovo Serbs were shot at in Bica, a Kosovo Serb majority village. Two of the group were injured, one seriously. A KFOR patrol in the vicinity of the village assisted in the evacuation of the wounded to the KFOR Spanish hospital in Istok. One of the victims was later transferred to the French field hospital in Mitrovica. UNMIK police are continuing their investigation.

10. The detention order of Shefket Musliu, who is being held by UNMIK while awaiting trial on racketeering and intimidation charges, has been extended for another 60 days, until 5 October 2003.

Attacks against the Force and its operational activities

11. On 10 August, an unknown person fired a 9-mm bullet into the camp airfield in Multinational Brigade (South-West), hitting a building but injuring no one.

12. Operation "Dynamic Response '03" and additional operations were launched concurrently by KFOR, seizing a substantial quantity of weapons and ammunition. The visibility of KFOR throughout Kosovo while conducting operations allowed it to address concerns of security in the province and ease tensions among Kosovo Serbs. KFOR is showing its determination to improve security in-theatre, and its increased presence may have prevented the escalation of retaliatory actions by Kosovo Serbs.

Cooperation and compliance by the parties

13. The armed forces of Serbia and Montenegro and the Ministry of Internal Affairs Special Police continued to remain in compliance with the terms and conditions of the Military Technical Agreement.

14. During the period under review, four roll calls involving 20 Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC) units were carried out at short notice. The results continue to show a low rate of unauthorized absenteeism, with 17 out of a total of 1,053 persons absent without permission (1.6 per cent). However, the results also show that the number of persons on leave was still unacceptably high. KPC was informed that leave for personnel, including time earned for exercises and training, should be spread out on a planned basis over the holiday season. The minimum required presence of KPC (set at 75 per cent at all times) was not met, with 60.5 per cent present on average. Out of the 20 units mustered, only 10 were considered to be operational.

15. On 13 August, a Kosovo-wide roll call was conducted. Of the 2,874 persons involved in the muster, 40 per cent were on duty in their barracks and 9 per cent were on duty elsewhere in Kosovo. This muster showed 58 per cent present (including duty in barracks and elsewhere in Kosovo) of the 75 per cent directed. The previous muster, conducted in May 2003, had resulted in 87 per cent present. The Kosovo-wide muster verified that there was no proper leave planning in place

within KPC, and out of the 84 KPC units mustered, only 11 could be considered operational.

16. Nine cases of non-compliance were reported in August. These include three weapon violations, two criminal acts, two acts of disobeying orders and two appeals. A total of 47 cases remained open, of which 35 were due to be closed pending signature and UNMIK approval.

Outlook

17. The general situation in Kosovo, while stable, is less secure since the middle of 2003. The murders at Zahac and Skulanovo heightened tensions within the province. This resulted in an escalation in inter-ethnic aggressiveness. These acts, coupled with the fact that several organized crime groups and ethnic Albanian armed groups are not interested in stabilizing Kosovo, contributed to a less secure environment. These groups oppose the strengthening of any State institutions dealing with law and order. The high level of organized crime activities can extend to altercations between criminal gangs.